

**Edina Art Center Board Meeting  
December 10, 2009  
4:30pm at EAC**

**Edina Art Center Mission Statement**

The Edina Art Center mission is to provide facilities, programs and services that meet and reflect the needs of our residents and neighbors for participation, education and enjoyment in the Arts with emphasis on fine arts.

Members present: Hafed Bouassida, Rick Fesler, Bev Fischer-Soshea, Bill McCabe, Heather Randall King, Megan Norman, Renee Usem and Michael Whitt

Members absent: Ken Rosland, Sharanya Srinivasan, John Swon

Staff present: Diana Hedges, Phil Johnson and John Keprios

**CALL TO ORDER:** Heather Randall King, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm.

**APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES**

The minutes for the November 19, 2009 meeting were read and approved.

**PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE (EPAC) - Rick Fesler**

Rick Fesler passed out the minutes of the last meeting of the Edina Public Art Committee which under ideal circumstances will be sent to Board members well in advance of the Board meetings. As the documents were being distributed, Heather King asked Diana Hedges if Anne Spooner was responsible for sending EPAC minutes to Board members. Diana Hedges responded that Rick Fesler had agreed to do that. She added that the document being distributed had not been approved by EPAC. That approval would routinely be done at the next EPAC meeting. Michael Whitt asked if Anne Spooner could include Board members on the distribution list. Diana Hedges agreed to have Anne Spooner do that.

Renee Usem asked if EPAC might consider contributing funds for a willow wall in the Greer Garden. Rick Fesler responded that EPAC was challenged to keep up with funding for planned community art projects, such as the Edina Promenade, but he would bring this request to the next EPAC meeting. Heather King asked if Renee Usem and Bill McCabe could attend the next EPAC meeting to explain the Greer Garden project and how a contribution would benefit the community. Rick Fesler invited them to attend the next EPAC meeting at 4:00 pm on January 7, 2010 in the Mayor's Conference Room at City Hall.

**GREER GARDEN - Renee Usem and Bill McCabe**

Bill McCabe reported that the contract had been signed and excavation had begun. Two meetings had been held to refine the design and planning had begun for a formal opening for the garden. A possible date is Sunday evening, June 20th. The Greer family has not agreed to that date as of yet. Project funds are \$10,000 short but potential donors are being contacted. Renee Usem added that the Kelodale Garden Club, has not agreed to donate

planting services and Centennial Lakes will donate plants. Diana Hedges added that Kelodale Garden Club has helped with Art Center landscaping projects for more than 31 years as well as contributing funds to the buckthorn removal program on the Art Center grounds.

### **FILM FESTIVAL - John Swon**

Rick Fesler reported in John Swon's absence. The festival committee has met three times and has taken giant steps forward. Most recently, they met with the manager at the Edina Landmark Theater and learned more about what was required to get approval from the theater's corporate headquarters in Los Angeles. Rick had hoped to have a response from the headquarter's people in time for this meeting but still expects to hear from them in the next few days. The local manager was in agreement with some dates in October 2010 and offered a rate quotation as well. The manager had worked on a previous film festival and was very enthusiastic about the plans for the Art Center's festival. Another positive development is the continuing support of the Executive Director of the 50th and France Business Association. Beverly Fisher Soshea asked who selects the films and how long is the festival to run? Rick Fesler replied that the plan is to show for 2 to 4 days on two screens. John Swon and others on the committee have lots of experience with independent filmmakers and film festivals; they will select the films to be shown. The committee is also developing alliances with local notables in the film industry, as one example film producer Bill Pohlad. Rick Fesler also has been in contact with the country's foremost movie archivist, Bob DeForrest, and he is able to obtain rare films and perhaps the celebrity personalities that go with them. These are some of the exciting things being contemplated for the Edina Film Festival with more news to come.

### **MEDIA STUDIOS - Phil Johnson**

Phil reported that business continued to be brisk during the Holiday season rush. Revenues as of the end of November were 37% ahead of the prior year; \$56,000 compared to \$41,000. The improvement can be traced directly to continued response from people who had seen the Star Tribune article in December 2008. Heather King had suggested we contact Kim Ode, Tribune columnist. Her article has provided exposure far beyond anything that could have been generated by paid advertising and the challenge now is to find additional venues for increased exposure. Phil described a letter received from a customer that complimented the staff and the ease of using the media equipment. Heather King suggested that this customer might be asked to write a letter to local media. Phil will follow-up on that suggestion.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING - Michael Whitt**

Michael distributed a document for members' perusal prior to the next scheduled Board meeting in April 2010. The document, entitled Board of Director's Strategic Development Committee, is a first draft that captures the essence of a series of informal conversations between Michael Whitt, John Swon and Heather King. It includes four "Vision" categories for advancement of the Edina Art Center and its mission. The categories are Financial, Facility, Strategic, and Community & Outreach. Michael suggests that Board Members use it as an outline to foster further discussion or, possibly, as a basis for formation of a standing committee. Heather King then asked John Keprios to summarize the status of proposals for expansion of the Art Center. John responded that the minutes of prior meetings would

reflect that any proposals for expansion or additions to the Art Center are on a “perpetual hold” status as far as the City Council is concerned. Because of the economy, it is on the shelf and could be reopened when the time and circumstances are right. Diana Hedges provided another document for inclusion in Board members homework, for the December staff retreat as well as the April Board meeting. Heather King asked that the Board receive a report concerning the conclusions and recommendations developed at the December staff retreat. Hafeed Bouassida asked for clarification as to fund raising by staff or board members. Michael Whitt and Diana Hedges stated that staff was not to be assigned to raise funds but the Board is free to raise funds for projects of its choosing. Michael reiterated that his suggested strategic planning process is intended to support the mission of the Art Center, not to change it. Hafeed commented that he would like more information about limits and parameters before launching a brainstorming effort that could go beyond permissible limits. Michael responded that while the Board might not have free rein, it was his feeling that well-founded proposals from the Board would receive consideration from the City Council. Beverly Fisher-Soshea commented that she had mentioned to a friend that she was attending a Board meeting today and the friend asked where the Edina Art Center was. The friend owned an art gallery in Minneapolis and is very well-connected in the local art community but did not know anything about the Edina Art Center. Bev was very surprised at this. She is concerned with this lack of visibility and she would like to discuss what greater visibility could mean for success and growth for the Art Center.

#### **NEW BUSINESS: Committee Meetings for January, February and March 2010**

Heather King reported that she had asked Board members who headed up sub-committees to estimate the number of volunteers they would need to work on their planned projects and events in the coming year. John Swon had sent her a report specifying the need for 20 volunteers to support the Film Festival. Michael Whitt reported that the Juried Show responsibilities took much more time than he had anticipated. He would recommend that the JS be coordinated by Co-chairs to handle the volume of meetings and communication required. He also recommended that the mail campaign to solicit sponsors be dropped since it really didn't produce significant sponsorship funds. Three or four additional board members could also serve in active JS capacities. Renee Usem and Bill McCabe are presently planning the Greer Garden Opening Reception. It's a bit early to know how many volunteers will be needed. They plan an organizational meeting in April and planting in late May thru early June. Additional people will be contacted in advance of those events. Bill McCabe asked Diana Hedges if exhibits could be planned to support the Greer Garden events. Diana replied that some of Pat Greer's work might be exhibited as part of the Edina Garden Art Sale and May Celebration. That could be an effective tie-in.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Diana Hedges**

Diana asked if board members had any questions about the financial summary she had distributed at the last meeting. There were none. She expressed appreciation to three board members, Hafeed Bouassida, Megan Norman and Rick Fesler for their participation at the children's workshop on Sunday. Diana invited all board members to come to workshops and classes as a way to get the flavor of what goes on at the art center. She has worked on a few grant applications including one to be submitted to Edina Rotary for two thousand dollars to purchase an Emergency Defibrillator. They had not applied to the Edina Federated Women's Club over the last two years because they had been informed that the Women's Club was focusing its attention on children's causes. Heather King suggested that a grant

application to that organization might be appropriate this year because its program focus had broadened. Diana said that she would put it back on their list, but that maybe a Board Member would like to help with the fundraising. Diana reported that board member Beverly Fisher Soshea had spent several days observing front desk activities and procedures. Bev commented that her intent was to develop a list of the main objectives for front desk people. She also commented that the front desk is a very busy place and the people at the desk had to know a great deal about many different subjects. Renee Usem had volunteered to come in one day a week to do membership renewals. Diana expressed appreciation for her efforts. Renee commented that the membership list is presently on an Excel spreadsheet. She believes that a customer contact software program, such as ACT, could provide enhanced functionality. Renee will look into this and report at a future meeting. The front desk computers can have the membership file running in the background and a member lookup takes mere seconds. Whether this could be done faster using another program is somewhat doubtful. Diana reminded that volunteer signup lists were still posted and available to all.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Responding to a question from Hafed Bouassida, Rick Fesler clarified that the next EPAC meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2010. Diana Hedges commended Chairperson Heather King for spearheading one of the best years ever for the Edina Art Center and Board members gave her a round of applause.

#### **COMMUNITY COMMENT**

No members of the community were present.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm.

Next Board Meeting will be April 22, at 4:30pm.